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From: "Kraus, John J" <KrausJJ@navair.navy.mil>
To: "secretary@fmc.gov" <secretary@fmc.gov>
Date: 1/3/03 5:48PM
Subject: Cruise Line Surety Bond Limit

Mr. VanBrakle,

The current \$15M bond limit is much too low to provide any protection for cruise line passengers. The recovery rules for this bond place consumers last in the line of those who receive any compensation for failure of a provider. I lost a replacement cruise award when Regency Cruises went bankrupt. After filing the extensive claim documents, I was told that the fund would likely be depleted before any passenger claims could be honored.

Seeking arbitration or any other legal remedy is impractical as long as an action against a cruise provider now must be pursued in their home venue. Requiring a consumer to take action in the supplier's business location, rather than locally, has been relied upon by most providers to discourage legitimate claims. A mechanism should be made available whereby complaint actions could be pursued with an agency such as the FMC.

While we're discussing the subject of cruising, the Jones Act should be repealed or modified with respect to passenger cruising. We were also negatively affected by this anachronism on a cruise to the extent that we never boarded the ship.

Sincerely,

John Kraus

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